

## **HERSETH SANDLIN JOINS SOUTH DAKOTA DELEGATION IN SENDING LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA**

**□ Herseth Sandlin, Johnson and Thune send letter in support of disaster relief for South Dakota counties**

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Washington, DC ( July 23, 2010) -Today, U.S. Rep Stephanie Herseth Sandlin joined Senators Tim Johnson and John Thune in sending a letter to President Obama supporting Governor Rounds' recent request for a Presidential disaster declaration for Dewey, Perkins, and Ziebach Counties, as well as for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

"Our state has been deeply impacted by the recent tornadoes, flooding and storms. I support the Governor's request for disaster relief to get families and communities in South Dakota back on their feet," said Herseth Sandlin.

The letter, which urges full support of Governor Round's July 19<sup>th</sup> request, is reprinted below:

Dear President Obama:

We write to express our full support of South Dakota Governor M. Michael Rounds' July 19<sup>th</sup>

request for a Presidential disaster declaration for Dewey, Perkins, and Ziebach Counties, as well as for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. This declaration would greatly assist South Dakota's recovery from tornadoes, severe storms, and flooding that occurred between June 16 and June 24, 2010.

As reflected in South Dakota's disaster declaration request, a series of Pacific weather systems combined to deliver repeated heavy rainfalls over western South Dakota during this period. The soil became saturated and the streams responded quickly to the heavy precipitation. EF-2 tornadoes, with wind speeds of 120-130 miles per hour, also caused significant damage. This required state and local agencies to incur extraordinary expenses in the course of providing emergency response services. With respect to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, many reservation homes were damaged and destroyed, and were not covered by flood insurance. The reservation has been recently impacted by two Presidentially declared disasters (DR-1887-SD and DR-1914-SD) resulting from two winter storms that brought down miles of power lines and caused severe hardship for reservation residents.

We strongly support the assessment by Governor Rounds that the situation resulting from these disasters is of "such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and affected tribal and local governments, and supplemental federal assistance is necessary."

In light of these considerations, we respectfully request that you quickly declare a major disaster for the relevant areas of our state and instruct federal agencies to expedite the delivery of all forms of federal disaster assistance for which South Dakota is eligible. South Dakota has responded to 12 presidential disaster declarations since 2005, and the costs associated with this disaster will only make state, county, and municipal budgets worse if federal assistance is not provided.

We would be pleased to offer any assistance that you may require in fulfilling this request, and we thank you for your consideration of our request on behalf of South Dakota. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us if we can provide you with additional information.

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